

TEA PARTY SNACK PLATTER CD LINER NOTES

Travis Edward Pike

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Travis Pike's Tea Party was a popular, Boston-based, concert-oriented musical group (1967-1969), founded by Travis to showcase his original material. Only two of those songs, "If I Didn't Love You Girl" and "The Likes of You" were recorded and released (1968, Alma Records, 45 rpm, single), but "If I Didn't Love You Girl" subsequently found its way onto several European Psychedelic compilation albums. When their short-lived WBZ TV show *Here and Now* was cancelled in 1968, the band migrated to Southern California where, to survive, they had to begin playing top 40 tunes in dance halls and bars. Working in clubs wasn't so bad, but not being able to develop and showcase his original material was, and Travis left the group in 1969.

Travis Edward Pike's Tea Party Snack Platter is the latest triumph in Travis and Adam Pike's on-going efforts to reclaim the best of the songs and music from Travis's mid-sixties to early-seventies back catalog before the time capsule (Travis), deteriorates beyond salvage. In the eleven songs featured on this album, all culled from the Travis Pike's Tea Party original repertoire enjoyed by their many concert fans, the brothers captured the essence of those early performances and the spirit of those musically exciting and socially turbulent times.

01. The first cut on the CD is a fresh recording of "If I Didn't Love You Girl," side one of the 1968 recording released on the Alma label. Arguably more psychedelic in concept than rock style, its background vocals contradict the lead vocal, reflecting the ego-preserving schizophrenia of first love.

02. "Okay" was one of the first rock songs in the band's repertoire. It offers excuses, rather than apologies — even going so far as to imply that the girl's unusually high standards are all that make the vocalist's misbehavior seem inappropriate. It's a bad excuse and he won't get away with it . . . unless the girl is crazy about him.

03. "Worried Sick" was inspired by a drum-head replacement. In such situations, Travis usually entertained the crowd with his stories in rhyme while the equipment was repaired, but George just started strumming and singing "Goodnight Irene." Taken unawares, there was little Travis and Karl could do, but join in! It went over so well that Travis composed "Worried Sick." Never performed after the group's California migration, it will be new to all but their most loyal New England fans.

04. "Can't You See" is a refreshing brokenhearted love song in that it doesn't threaten or wish ill upon the purportedly responsible party in the failed relationship.

05. "One-Ten Blues" is less remorseful than mournful, dealing with a personal loss so tragic and profound that a recovery is unlikely, perhaps even impossible.

06. "Stay By Me" is Travis's rocking, powerful plea for a stable relationship based on love and history.

07. On the other hand, "What's the Matter with Your Mind" is an equally rocking, disillusioned lover's primal scream -- as likely a projection of the disturbed state his mind, as of hers.

08. "In Your Eyes" beautifully addresses the hurt, anger and potential relief inherent in the breakup of an ill-fated romance.

09. "I'll Do Anything I Can" is one of those promises made out of desperate, adolescent infatuation, but one must wonder if "anything" will ever be enough to win this particular gal -- or any other, for that matter. Experience suggests a vague "anything" hasn't much of a chance against a steady job.

10. "You Got What I Need" is a rocking celebration of primal, post-adolescent hormonal activity run amuck.

11. "Oh Mama (2014)" is a new recording of one of Travis's outstanding hard rock tunes. It's unclear what, exactly, Mama did, but it resulted in a catastrophe that, while it may be personal, could as easily have global consequences.

NOTE: Other than Travis, no former Travis Pike's Tea Party musicians were complicit in this recording. Lyrics and music, acoustic guitar, finger-picking, conga drums, cow bell and vocals by Travis Edward Pike. Drums, electric bass, electric and acoustic guitars, electronic keyboards and additional vocals by Adam Pike. This recording was produced by Travis and Adam Pike, and engineered and mixed by Adam Pike.



Travis Pike's Tea Party, 1968, left to right: lead guitarist and harmony vocalist Karl Garrett; next, his face obscured by the tea pot, is drummer Phil Vitale; center, electric bass player Mikey Joe Valente; in profile, singer-songwriter Travis Pike; and front, apparently looking for a fresh tea bag in his guitar case, second harmony vocalist and rhythm guitarist, Juris "George" Brox.

And because you really can't see them very well in the first photo, in this photo they are, left to right, Karl Garrett, lead guitarist and harmony vocalist; percussionist Phil Vitale; and bass player, Mikey Joe Valente.



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